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Agnes Paschal: The Vines Collier Family and Salem Baptist Church

JANUARY 19, 2019 2:40 PM \ [LEAVE A COMMENT](#) \ [BY COLLIERHERITAGE](#) \ [EDIT](#)



Salem Baptist Church as it appeared in 2001. The church has undergone remarkable expansion since that time.

Stories of the Vines Collier family are told by a first-hand acquaintance and neighbor in the book,

Ninety-Four Years, Agnes Paschal. The book, originally published in 1871, is available through The Reprint Company, Spartanburg, South Carolina. This historical memoir of Agnes Paschal and her family was written by her son, George W. Paschal, following her passing. The writing style is typical of that of the 1800s.

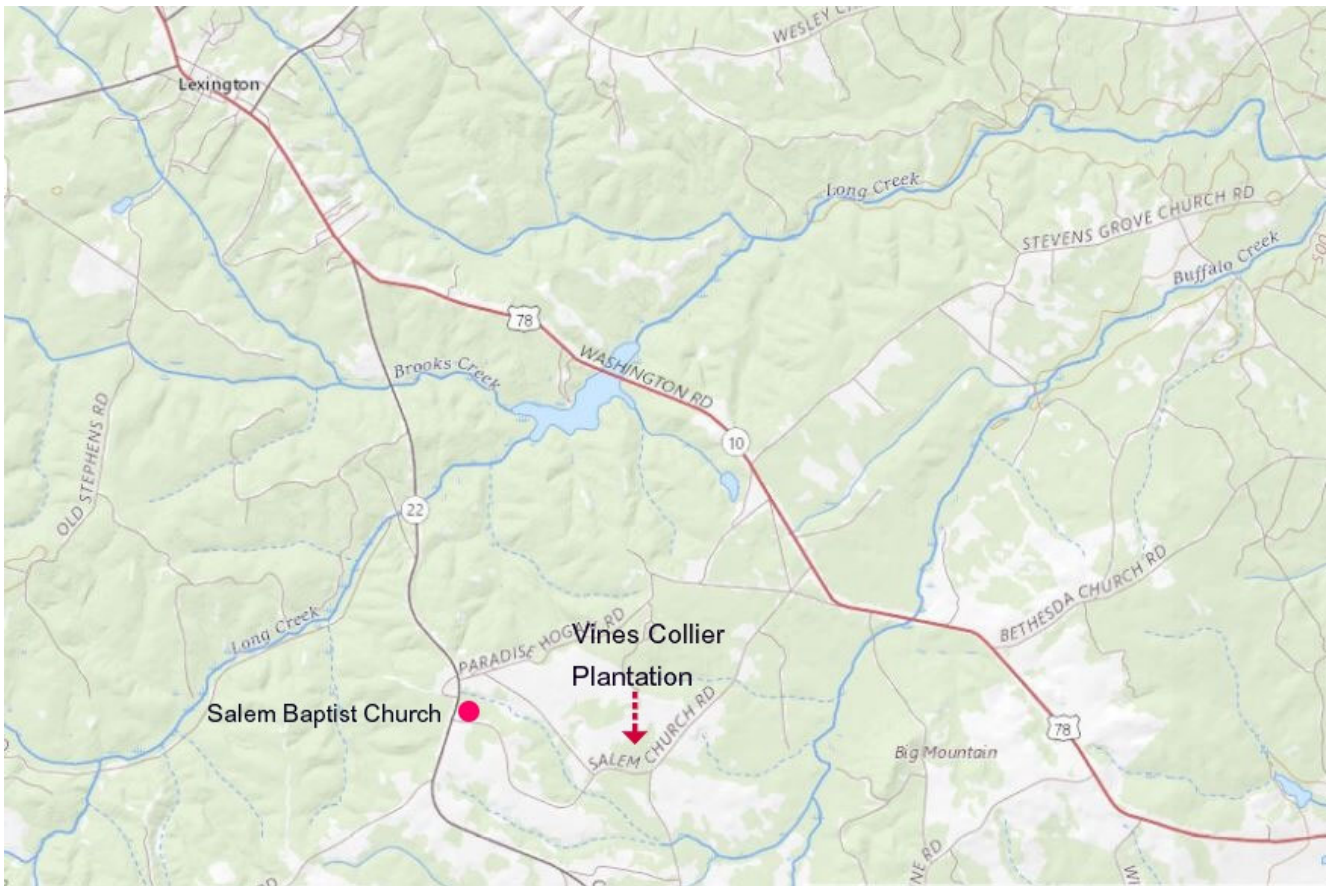
Agnes Brewer was born in 1776 in North Carolina. In 1784, her family moved to the Georgia frontier, settling near Lexington on Long Creek, in a part of Wilkes County that would later become Oglethorpe County. Agnes married George Paschal in 1802. Together they raised a family and were contributing citizens of the Lexington area until George's death in 1832. The Georgia Gold Rush, which started that same year, lured many adventurers, including George W. Paschal, son of George and Agnes. The next year, Agnes was persuaded by her son, George W., to move from the farm in Lexington to the gold mining town of Aurarie, Georgia, in Lumpkin County.

Vines Collier arrived with his family in the Lexington area at about the same time as the Brewers, settling along Buffalo Creek, south of Long Creek.

Baptists in the area were in need of a reliable source of water for baptizing. Vines Collier, although not a Baptist, allowed a church to be built on a part of his plantation along a branch of Buffalo Creek. At that location, Salem Baptist Church was founded in 1789. The building became known as the Salem Meeting House and hosted a local school, Prospect Academy. Agnes Paschal was a member of the church and her son became a teacher in the academy.

Vines Collier passed away in 1795. In the following years the plantation came under the control of Isaac Collier, son of Vines, and Clerk of Superior Court for Oglethorpe County. Isaac had a disagreement with either the church or the school, or both. The result was that he constructed a fence to prevent access to the Salem Meeting House. The congregation voted to relocate to property on a public road. However, there was a considerable minority (including Agnes Paschal) that were not in favor of relocating. The division caused Agnes Paschal much grief and she moved her membership to another church.

When Isaac Collier ran again for Clerk of Court, the Baptists blamed him for their trouble and backed his opponent. Isaac was successfully ousted.



Map showing Long Creek, Buffalo Creek, the location of the Vines Collier home site and plantation, and the present-day location of Salem Baptist Church.

Here is the story as written by George W. Paschal in the book *Ninety-Four Years*, Agnes Paschal.

At the end of one year my brother was able to redeem his promises to his parents. So he became the student of a learned vagabond scholar by the name of Brantley, who became the teacher of Prospect Academy, which was attached to Salem Church. . . But at the end of a few months, Brantley broke down in consequences of drunkenness, and my brother was installed as the sole teacher. . .

Salem, as I have said, was one of our oldest meeting-houses. It was a wealthy neighborhood, and adjoining the plantation of Isaac Collier, who, for over twenty years, had been clerk of our Superior Court. Collier did not belong to the Baptist communion. Either the church, or some teacher of the academy had given him offense, so that he would patronize neither, and he so inclosed (sic) his plantation as very much to fence out both from convenient access by the public. As a means of relief, there rose up a party for removing the church a couple of miles to an open road. This was opposed by the more wealthy members and by the trustees of the academy. The controversy waxed warm, until the majority removed the meeting-house over the heads of the minority. . .

The clerk of the church, Woody Jackson, a hard-headed obstinate man, refused to go with the records to the new locality of his church. But on every day for the stated monthly meeting, he attended at the old place, where remained the academy, and where all the members had been

baptized. Jackson was regularly waited upon by three of the brethren, and cited to attend where the house of worship now was. He appeared and made his defense and was excommunicated. But the pastor of the church, the Rev. Jack Lumpkin, of another communion, sustained the minority, and withdrew his pastoral charge. . . .

My mother was among the minority, who retained the academy. She transferred her membership to Bethany, a church nearer to our residence, and only two miles from Lexington.

The minority retained the academy, and my brother became the teacher. But the majority built a school-house at the new site of their church, and employed Osborn Ely as their teacher, and would not send their children to my brother. The dispute lead to a knock-down between Ely and Samuel Lumpkin, one of the trustees of the academy . . .

The Baptists generally resented the course of Isaac Collier, the popular clerk, as the author of all their troubles. John Landrum, an old school-master of the church, whom we all loved very much, was put forward as a candidate to punish Mr. Collier; and he did it, effectually, by beating him for the office."

Subsequently, Isaac Collier sold the plantation and moved to Upson County, where he again entered politics. He was elected as State Representative and then State Senator (see March 27, 2015 CHF post: *Isaac Collier, son of Vines & Elizabeth Collier*).

NINETY-FOUR YEARS



AGNES PASCHAL

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